1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

and women wear a curved sickle, thrust without a sheath into the sash round their waist at the back; but this instrument is of less general use than the men's knives, and women are frequently forced to borrow knives from men who are near them.

Far and away the most important single material for the Lepchas is the bamboo, or rather the numerous varieties of different bamboos that they grow and recognise. In the house bamboo is used for the floor, ceiling, walls and balcony; out of it water-carriers, and on occasion water conduits are made. The drinking vessels—*patyoot*—are made from ten-inch sections of old and hollow bamboo; each *patyoot* is cut off just below a joint, where the natural growth forms a bottom for the vessel. The principal beverage drunk from these *patyoot* is *chi*, a sort of beer which is formed by pouring boiling water on fermented grain; this is drunk through a 'straw'—*pa-hip*—which consists of a section of a small-growing bamboo with the pith at the end loosened so as to form a rude filter. Pins and brooches are made from bamboo; bows and arrows, the Lepcha's only hunting weapons, quivers and scabbards, all are made of different sorts of bamboo; and the catalogue could be continued almost endlessly. Finally the young bamboo shoots are good to eat, and the leaves are fed to temporarily restrained domestic animals, such as oxen when they are needed for ploughing.

The Lepchas of Zongu do not know how to make pottery. Plates are usually replaced by big leaves, but there are a certain number of rudely carved wooden plates which are used on ceremonious occasions, and a few metal and china dishes and containers which have been got by trading from Tibetans or bought in exchange for cardamum.

The Lepchas weave strong and regular mats and baskets out of the bark of bamboo and various reeds, which they employ for a variety of purposes. This weaving is ideally men's work, as the weaving of thread is women's, but a certain number of women are as good mat-makers as any of the men, and there is felt to be no disgrace in employing articles made by women. During the summer months a mat called *tuk* is worn over the head as a protection against sun and rain; it is made of a double layer of finely woven bamboo filled with big leaves and has a rope in the centre to fasten it round the neck; it measures about three feet by four. Although the making of this article is considered to be specifically man's work, the best *tuk* in the village were said to be made by a woman, the mother of Gongyop.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

000 "The Congress, which has refused office in six provinces where the party is in a position to form Ministries, observed a *hartal* to mark the inauguration of autonomy in the provinces.

"The *hartal* was observed in Calcutta by the closing of Hindu shops. A small minority of Moslem-owned shops were also closed.

"Public services continued as usual, but schools and offices under the control of the Calcutta Corporation were closed. No disturbances have been reported."

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782 At almost the very moment when the Governor of Bengal
787 was administering the oath to his newly-appointed Ministers,
789 an old Lepcha woman was squatting on the ground in a remote valley in Sikkim, with an egg pressed against her forehead. This was the day of the *Cherim* ceremony, which is observed all over Sikkim twice in every year: once now, and again at the beginning of the winter. Its purpose is to find out what sickness is likely to trouble the village during the next few months and, since the Lepchas like to get as much benefit as possible out of any one celebration, also to keep
[887] away hail. Kahlyeu, a gentle old man of nearly eighty, had previously made a rough altar of the branches of trees. It
[133] faced up the valley in full sight of Kinchinjunga, the summit
[487] of which is only twenty miles away as the crow flies, but for poor toiling man a journey of many painful days along the
[137] roughest of paths, and through thick rhododendron forest, to
787 the lower slopes alone. On his roughly constructed altar
789 Kahlyeu now put a large brass tray in which were seven
778 cones of butter, four eggs (some said it should have been
782 three), one rupee, three small butter-lamps and a Tibetan
● [285 ceremonial scarf. The tray was placed on top of a plaited
415] bamboo winnowing-tray, on which was spread a piece of red cotton cloth. All this was an offering to the spirits who dwell
[776] in the mountain, which the local people know only as Konchen. Before the eggs were placed in position Pom-ri, the old woman who was making the offering, placed each in

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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The *Cherim* ceremony. The *Mun* Pom-Ri divining by means of an egg.

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The rough altar, with the offering to Kinchinjunga in position.

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Kahlyeu and the *Mun* imploring the spirits to accept the offering.

[facing p. 4]

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Happy family.

[285]

Lepcha girl.

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Tafoor's two daughters.

[301
415]

Baby, having overeaten at luncheon.

[facing p. 210]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

it managed to flutter away. "Why have you done this mischief?" said the blacksmith. "Now I am going to kill you." But to this the firefly replied: "Kill me, if you like, but remember that if you do your house will remain upside down for ever." He then went on to tell the blacksmith why he had been sent. The latter thought for a bit and at last replied: "All right, I will give you the fire, but first you must put my house in order again." The blacksmith then took up some fire to give the insect, but suddenly realised that it had no means of carrying it. He searched about in the house and at last produced a flint and some tinder. These he stuck into the firefly's bottom, which explains why this creature still goes about with a fire in its tail.

As soon as the firefly returned it showed the two brothers how to use the flint and tinder. The elder brother lighted a fire and thought he would prepare some *chi*, when he realised that he had nothing with which to make it ferment. He was somewhat at a loss to know what to do when one Takder Ting, a retainer of the family, volunteered to go and fetch the ferment from an old woman named Numli Nyu, who lived in the plains and who alone possessed the secret.

Takder Ting stayed with her for a few days and soon made himself useful about the house, as a result of which she soon grew used to his presence. After he had been there for a day or two the old woman decided to make some ferment; but before commencing her preparations she took particular care to cover Takder Ting with a *tangar*, which is a basket with such close mesh that he found it impossible to see out of it. When he had been covered over, however, he told the old woman that he could see everything, and suggested that if she really wanted to prevent him from seeing what she was doing it would be better to cover him with a *tung-jyang*, which is a special kind of basket with a very open mesh. The old woman believed his story and did as he suggested. He told her that he could see nothing at all, although he could, of course, see perfectly all that was happening.

He watched very carefully, and presently saw the old

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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Ongden, a bridegroom of fifty.

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Ongden's new wife (in the bottom left-hand corner, wearing a white bodice) arriving at his house for the wedding. Her attendants are just about to enter the house.

[FACING p. 258]

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

bowstring; and a little pouch, containing aconite poison and a few common implements, is suspended to his girdle. A hat he seldom wears, and when he does, it is often extravagantly broad and flat-brimmed, with a small hemispherical crown. It is made of leaves of *Scitamineæ*, between two thin plates of bamboo-work, clumsy and heavy; this is generally used in the rainy weather, while in the dry a conical one is worn, also of platted slips of bamboo, with broad flakes of talc between the layers, and a peacock's feather at the side. The umbrella consists of a large hood, much like the ancient boat called a coracle, which being placed over the head reaches to the thighs behind. It is made of platted bamboo, enclosing broad leaves of *Phrynium*. A group of Lepchas with these on, running along in the pelting rain, are very droll figures; they look like snails with their shells on their backs. All the Lepchas are fond of ornaments, wearing silver hoops in their ears, necklaces made of cornelian, amber, and turquoise, brought from Tibet, and pearls and corals from the south, with curious silver and golden charm-boxes or amulets attached to their necks or arms. These are of Tibetan workmanship, and often of great value: they contain little idols, charms and written prayers, or the bones, hair, or nail-parings of a Lama: some are of great beauty, and highly ornamented. In these decorations, and in their hair, they take some pride, the ladies frequently dressing the latter for the gentlemen: thus one may often see, the last thing at night, a damsel of discreet port, demurely go behind a young man, unplait his pig-tail, teaze the hair, thin it of some of its lively inmates, braid it up for him, and retire. The women always wear two braided pig-tails, and it is by this they are most readily distinguished from their effeminate-looking partners, who wear only one.